

No.  
308

# 15-6 Commando

WAR STORIES IN PICTURES

17

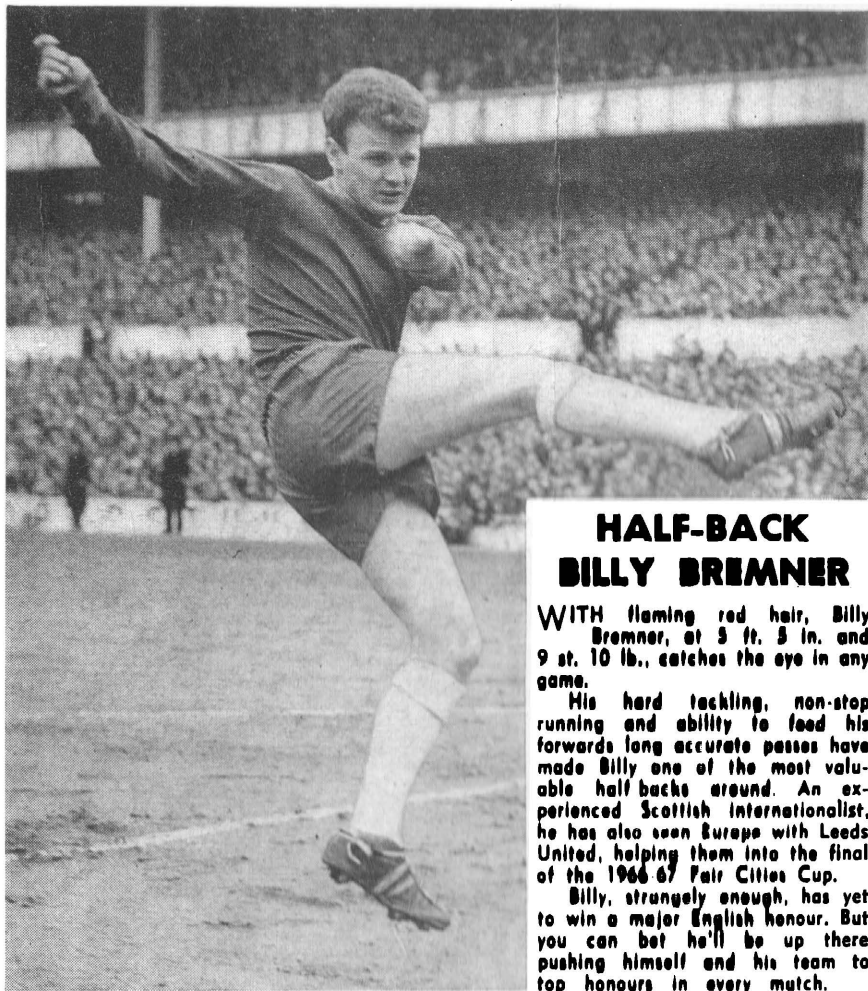


## FORGOTTEN SERGEANT

The scourge  
of the Japs

# TOP KICK

A Commando series



## HALF-BACK BILLY BREMNER

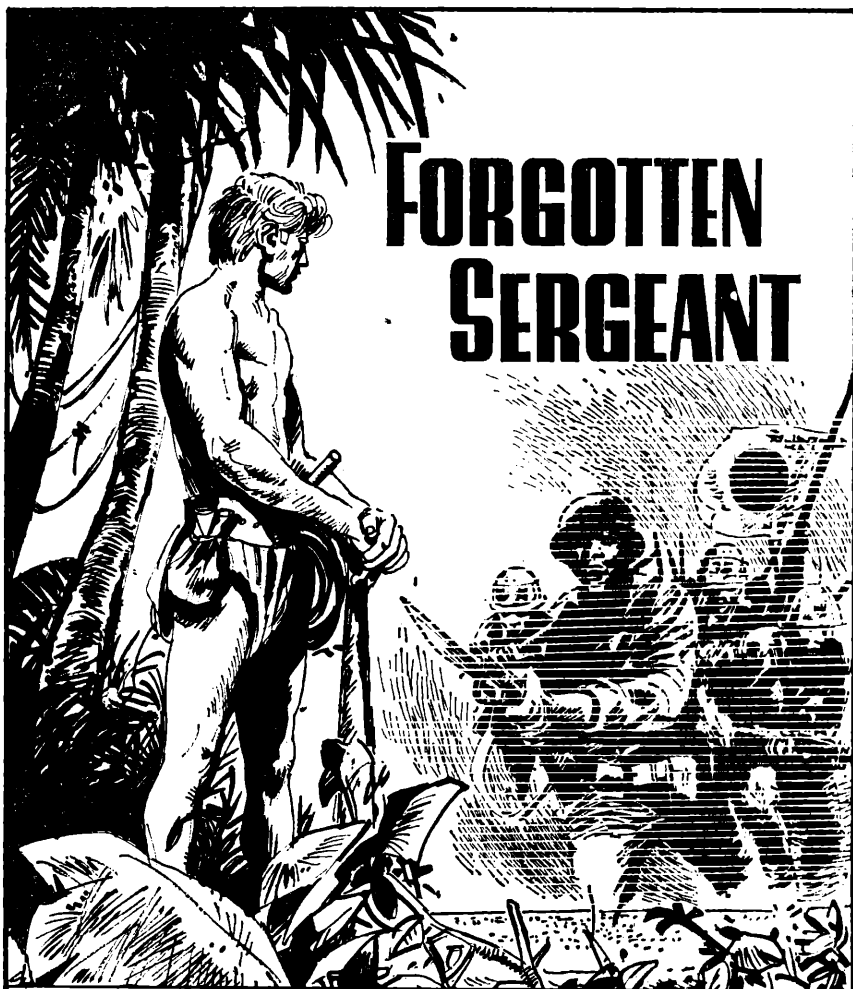
WITH flaming red hair, Billy Bremner, at 5 ft. 5 in. and 9 st. 10 lb., catches the eye in any game.

His hard tackling, non-stop running and ability to feed his forwards long accurate passes have made Billy one of the most valuable half backs around. An experienced Scottish internationalist, he has also won Europe with Leeds United, helping them into the final of the 1966-67 Fair Cities Cup.

Billy, strangely enough, has yet to win a major English honour. But you can bet he'll be up there pushing himself and his team to top honours in every match.

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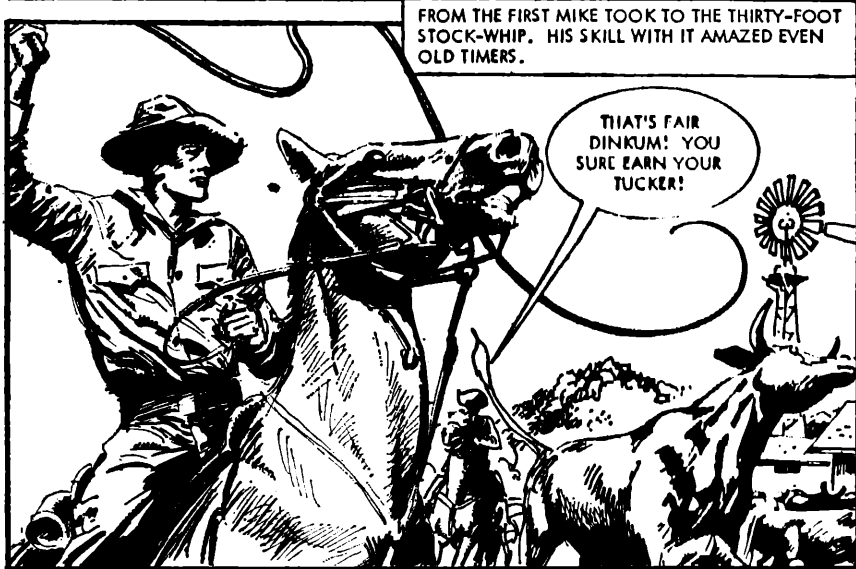
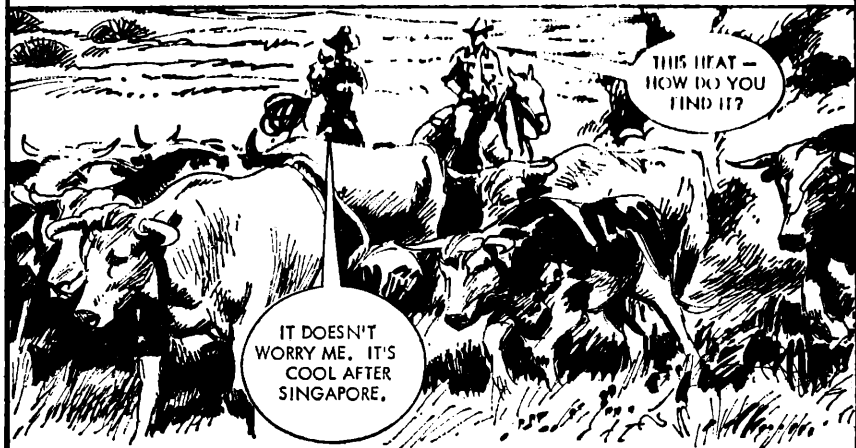
SIX STAR HALF-BACKS IN THIS MONTH'S SIX COMMANDOS.  
NEXT MONTH – SIX TOP WINGERS.



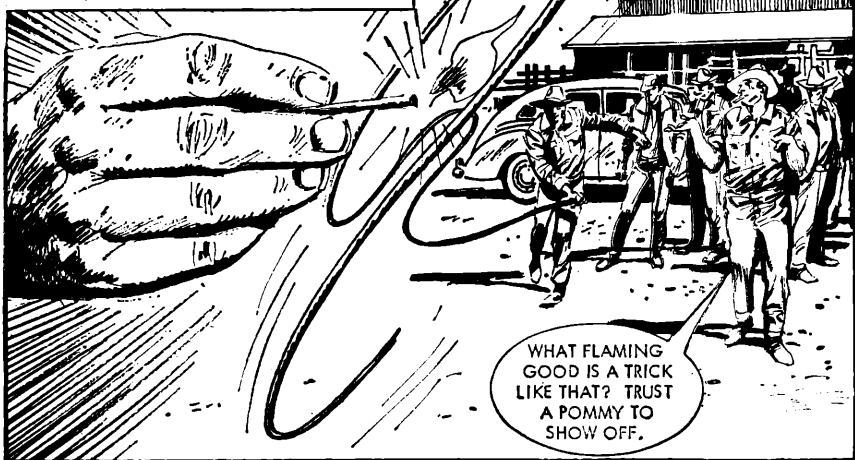
# FORGOTTEN SERGEANT

**O**NE EVENING IN 1942 A WILD LOOKING FIGURE EMERGED FROM THE JUNGLE SOUTH OF BUNA IN NEW GUINEA. BY THAT TIME THE JAPANESE ADVANCE IN THE PACIFIC WAS EVEN THREATENING AUSTRALIA. ALREADY THEY HAD OCCUPIED NEW GUINEA AS FAR SOUTH AS BUNA. BUT MIKE KIRK, EX-SOLDIER AND DIAMOND-PROSPECTOR, KNEW NOTHING OF THIS. HE HAD BEEN THE PRISONER OF A PRIMITIVE TRIBE FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS.

MIKE HAD CHEATED HIS WAY INTO THE BRITISH ARMY AT SIXTEEN, FIVE YEARS LATER, A SERGEANT WITH THE ROYAL BORDERERS IN SINGAPORE, HE WAS DISCHARGED. NOW A RESERVIST, HE MADE FOR AUSTRALIA TO BECOME A STOCKMAN ON A LARGE CATTLE STATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.



MIKE BECAME SO EXPERT WITH HIS WHIP THAT HE COULD FLICK OUT A MATCH AT THIRTY FEET WITHOUT TOUCHING THE FINGERS THAT HELD IT.



MIKE COULD USE THE WHIP FOR OTHER PURPOSES, AS HE SOON SHOWED HIS CRITIC.

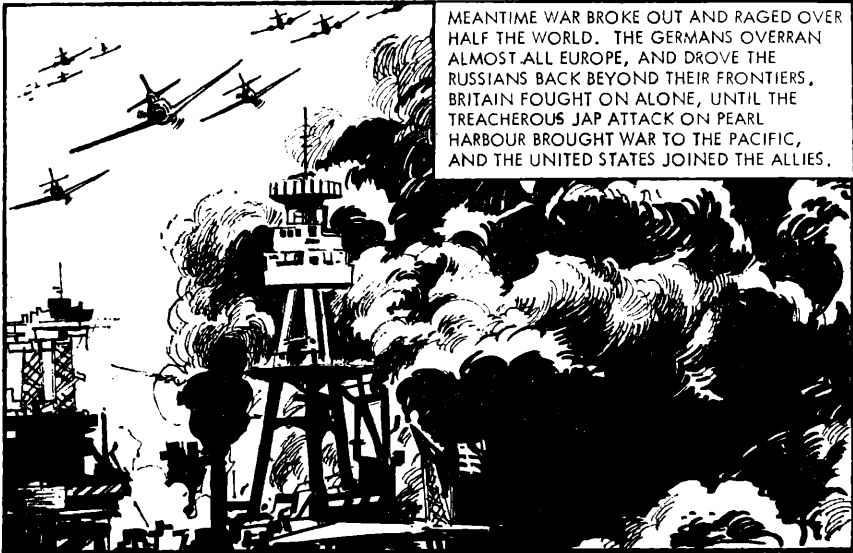






WHEN HE CAME TO, HE WAS PRISONER IN A NATIVE VILLAGE. THEY WERE HEAD-HUNTERS, BUT HAD NEVER SEEN A WHITE MAN BEFORE, AND KEPT HIM AS A TREASURED CURIOSITY.





MEANTIME WAR BROKE OUT AND RAGED OVER HALF THE WORLD. THE GERMANS OVERRAN ALMOST ALL EUROPE, AND DROVE THE RUSSIANS BACK BEYOND THEIR FRONTIERS. BRITAIN FOUGHT ON ALONE, UNTIL THE TREACHEROUS JAP ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOUR BROUGHT WAR TO THE PACIFIC, AND THE UNITED STATES JOINED THE ALLIES.

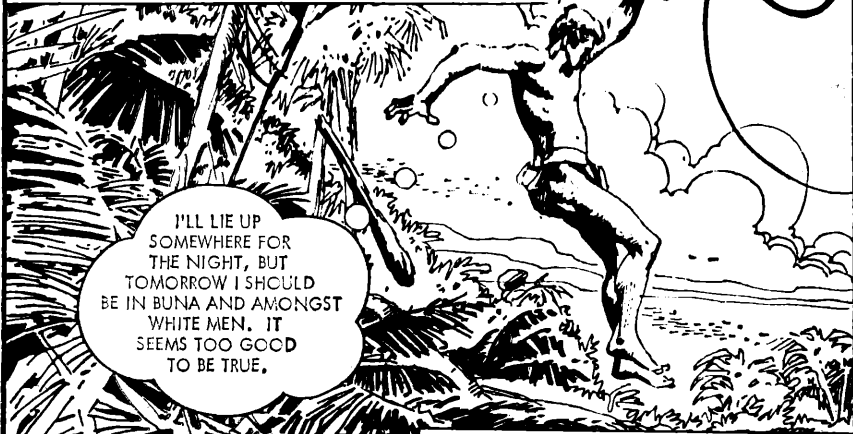
MIKE KNEW NOTHING OF THIS, OR THAT HIS OLD REGIMENT HAD BEEN TRAPPED IN THE SURRENDER OF SINGAPORE. ALTHOUGH HIS APPEARANCE BECAME WILDER AND WILDER, HE HAD KEPT HIS RAZOR AND HIS SHAVE BECAME A DAILY ATTRACTION FOR ALL THE TRIBE, UNTIL —

THE GODS  
ARE ANGRY!

THIS LOOKS  
LIKE MY CHANCE  
TO ESCAPE.


A FIERCE EARTHQUAKE HAD GRIPPED THE AREA.

DURING THE MAD CONFUSION HE GOT CLEAR OF THE VALLEY WHERE THE TRIBE LIVED, AND THAT JUNE EVENING IN 1942 HE EMERGED FROM THE JUNGLE WITH HIS STOCK-WHIP AND A POUCH FILLED WITH DIAMONDS.



I'LL LIE UP SOMEWHERE FOR THE NIGHT, BUT TOMORROW I SHOULD BE IN BUNA AND AMONGST WHITE MEN. IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.

SOON AFTER DARK, MIKE SAW THE FLICKERING LIGHT OF A CAMP FIRE AND QUICKLY HEADED FOR IT. HERE WAS A CHANCE TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH EUROPEANS OR FRIENDLY NATIVES. BUT AS HE DREW NEAR, THE STRANGE LANGUAGE BEING SPOKEN GAVE HIM THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE.



SOLDIERS — JAPS!  
WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE? AM I GOING CRAZY?

BEWILDERED, HE STUMBLED AWAY, HALF INCLINED TO BELIEVE HIS LONG CAPTIVITY HAD TURNED HIS BRAIN. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR JAP SOLDIERS TO BE IN NEW GUINEA, 4,000 MILES FROM THEIR OWN COUNTRY.



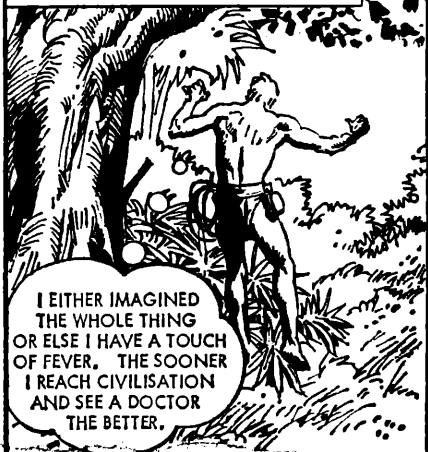
IT WAS WITH RELIEF HE HEARD OTHER MEN APPROACHING, AND HURRIED TOWARDS THEM.

THIS IS MADNESS!  
MORE JAPS — AND  
THEY LOOK LIKE  
BUSINESS! IS IT A  
FILM UNIT?



BADLY SHAKEN, HE CLIMBED A TREE TO THINK THINGS OUT, AND, UTTERLY EXHAUSTED, SLEPT TILL DAWN, WEDGED IN A FORKED BRANCH.

I EITHER IMAGINED  
THE WHOLE THING  
OR ELSE I HAVE A TOUCH  
OF FEVER. THE SOONER  
I REACH CIVILISATION  
AND SEE A DOCTOR  
THE BETTER.



HE HAD COVERED SEVERAL MILES IN THE DIRECTION OF THE COAST WHEN HE HEARD UGLY SOUNDS COMING FROM CLOSE BY. HE CAUTIOUSLY APPROACHED BUT THE SIGHT THAT MET HIS EYES WAS MOST UNBELIEVABLE.

SPEAK! YOU  
TELL WHERE HE IS  
OR WE KILL YOU!

NO!



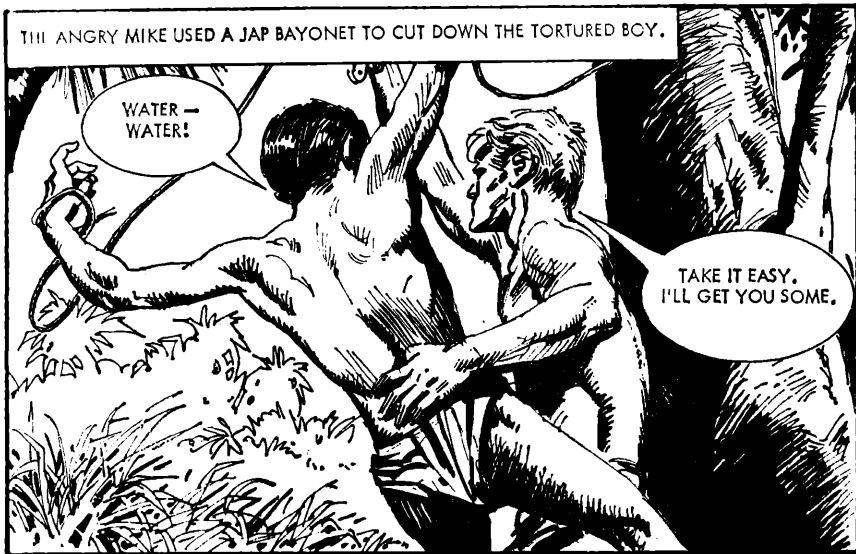
MIKE WENT INTO ACTION—



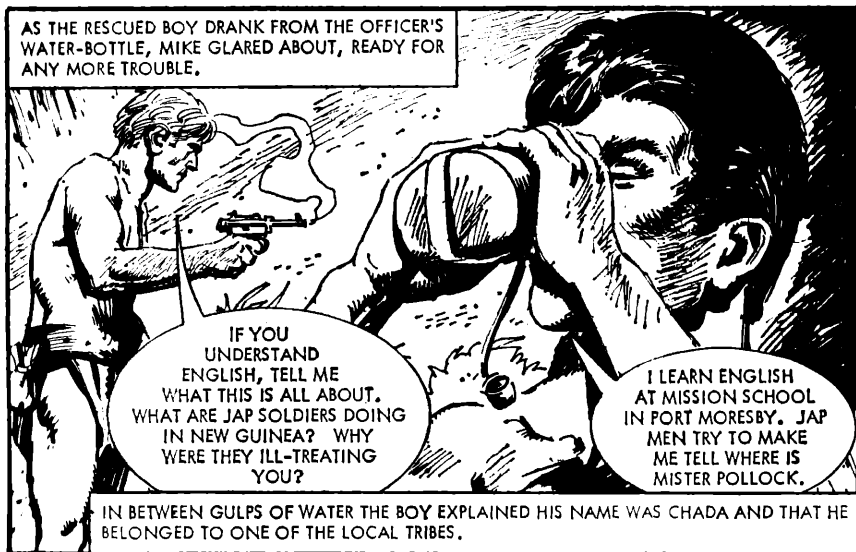
A MOMENT LATER THE OFFICER'S PISTOL WAS IN MIKE'S HAND, AND HE WAS SHOOTING DOWN THE OFFICER AND ONE OF THE SOLDIERS. THE OTHER FLED BEFORE HIS FURY.



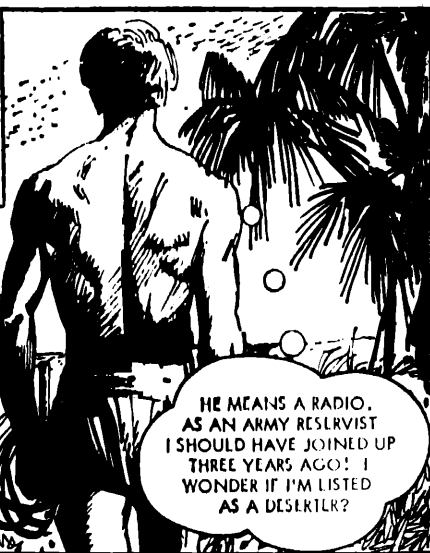
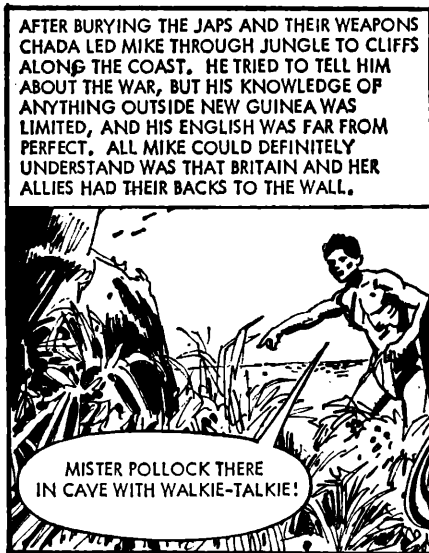
THU ANGRY MIKE USED A JAP BAYONET TO CUT DOWN THE TORTURED BOY.



AS THE RESCUED BOY DRANK FROM THE OFFICER'S WATER-BOTTLE, MIKE GLARED ABOUT, READY FOR ANY MORE TROUBLE.



IN BETWEEN GULPS OF WATER THE BOY EXPLAINED HIS NAME WAS CHADA AND THAT HE BELONGED TO ONE OF THE LOCAL TRIBES.



IT LOOKED AS THOUGH THEY WERE GOING STRAIGHT OVER THE CLIFF INTO THE SEA, HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW, BUT WHEN THEY HAD CRAWLED THROUGH THE SCREENING BUSHES, CHADA PUT HIS HEAD OVER THE EDGE AND WHISTLED SOFTLY THE OPENING BARS OF "WALTZING MATILDA," TO MIKE'S AMAZEMENT, SOMEONE BELOW REPLIED WITH THE NEXT TWO BARS.



MIKE'S ASTONISHMENT INCREASED WHEN THE BOY VANISHED OVER THE EDGE. HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THIS UNTIL HE HAD ALSO WRIGGLED FORWARD AND DROPPED TO THE LEDGE BELOW.



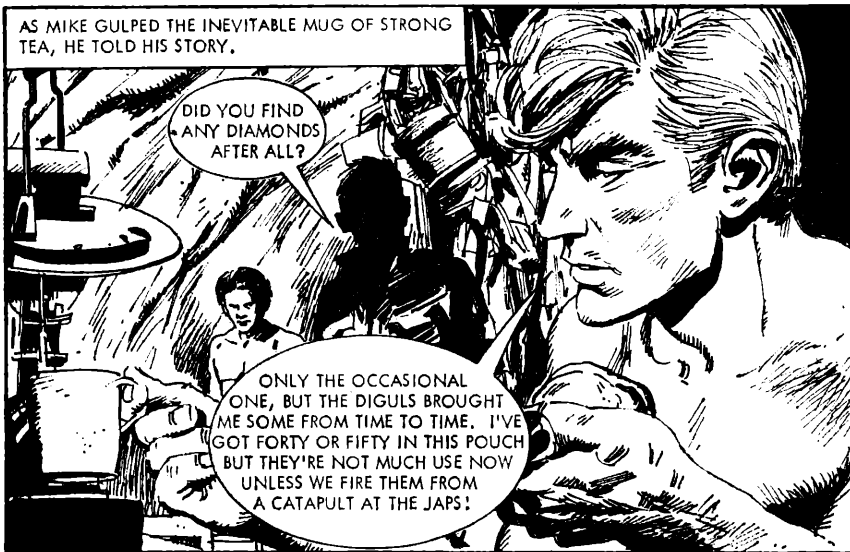


SECONDS LATER MIKE WAS IN THE CAVE, SHAKING HANDS WITH THE BIGGEST MAN HE HAD EVER SEEN,





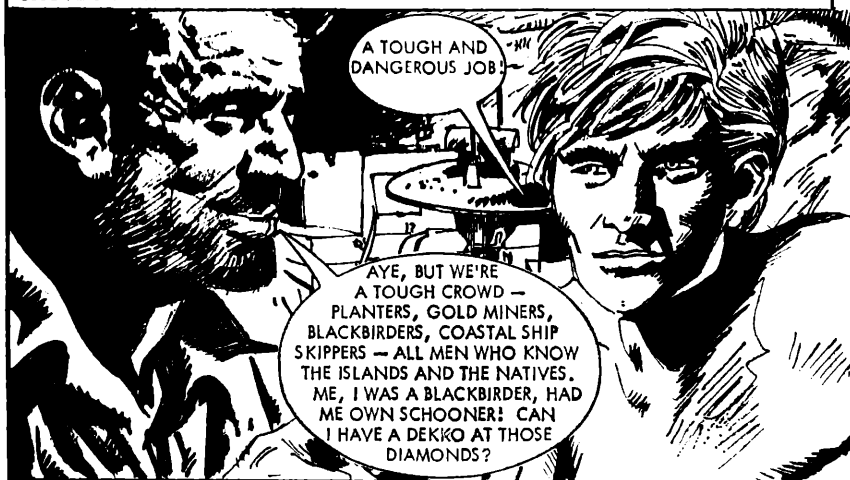
AS MIKE GULPED THE INEVITABLE MUG OF STRONG TEA, HE TOLD HIS STORY.



DID YOU FIND ANY DIAMONDS AFTER ALL?

ONLY THE OCCASIONAL ONE, BUT THE DIGULS BROUGHT ME SOME FROM TIME TO TIME. I'VE GOT FORTY OR FIFTY IN THIS POUCH BUT THEY'RE NOT MUCH USE NOW UNLESS WE FIRE THEM FROM A CATAPULT AT THE JAPS!

POLLOCK THEN EXPLAINED THAT THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY HAD ORGANISED A FORCE OF COASTWATCHERS TO STAY BEHIND WHEN THE JAPS ADVANCED SOUTHWARDS. THEIR TASK WAS TO REPORT MOVEMENTS OF JAP TROOPS, SHIPPING AND AIRCRAFT. LOCAL NATIVES WERE USED AS SPIES TO BRING THEM THE INFORMATION.



A TOUGH AND DANGEROUS JOB!

AYE, BUT WE'RE A TOUGH CROWD — PLANTERS, GOLD MINERS, BLACKBIRDERS, COASTAL SHIP SKIPPERS — ALL MEN WHO KNOW THE ISLANDS AND THE NATIVES. ME, I WAS A BLACKBIRD, HAD ME OWN SCHOONER! CAN I HAVE A DEKKO AT THOSE DIAMONDS?

MIKE KNEW THAT "BLACKBIRDERS" WERE MEN WHO RECRUITED NATIVE LABOUR FROM AMONG THE ISLANDS, USUALLY BAD TYPES. BUT HE WAS NOT CONCERNED WITH HIS COMPANION'S PAST, ONLY WITH HIS OWN FUTURE.

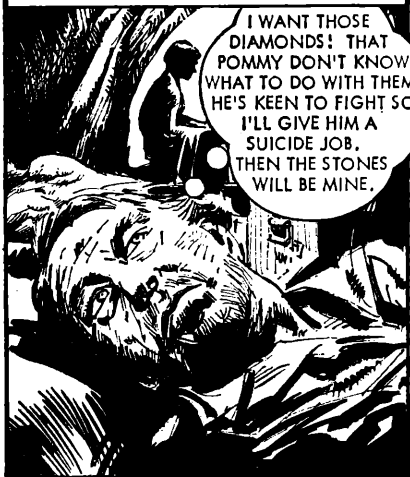


I WANT TO GET IN ON THIS WAR— AND QUICKLY! I SHOULD BE FIGHTING WITH THE ROYAL BORDERERS. SHOULD I TRY TO GET THROUGH TO PORT MORESBY?

YOU'D BE MORE USE HERE HELPING ME OUT. ANYWAY YOUR REGIMENT WAS CUT OFF WHEN SINGAPORE SURRENDERED... PROBABLY NO LONGER EXISTS.

THERE AND THEN BLACKIE POLLOCK DECIDED EVEN IF HE LOST SIGHT OF MIKE, HE WOULDN'T LOSE SIGHT OF THOSE DIAMONDS. THEY WERE WORTH A FORTUNE.

THAT NIGHT MIKE VOLUNTEERED TO STAND GUARD, BUT POLLOCK'S BRAIN WAS TOO ACTIVE FOR SLEEP.



I WANT THOSE DIAMONDS! THAT POMMY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEM! HE'S KEEN TO FIGHT SO I'LL GIVE HIM A SUICIDE JOB. THEN THE STONES WILL BE MINE.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, POLLOCK DUG OUT SOME CLOTHING FOR MIKE.



THE CHAP WHO WORE 'EM WAS KILLED NEAR HERE. YOU WERE A SERGEANT BEFORE, SO JUST KEEP THE STRIPES. WE'LL TALK ABOUT YOUR JOB LATER.

GLAD TO DISCARD THE CRUDE NATIVE GARMENTS, MIKE WAS EAGER TO HEAR WHAT THE COASTWATCHER HAD TO SUGGEST. HE CONSIDERED BLACKIE POLLOCK A HERO AND WAS ANXIOUS TO HELP HIM IN ANY WAY.

CHADA AND MY OTHER BOYS ARE GOOD AND LOYAL, BUT NOT INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO GET THE EXACT INFORMATION I NEED. HOW'D YOU LIKE TO GO WITH CHADA INTO BUNA AND SETTLE A FEW RUMOURS?

I'D LIKE NOTHING BETTER! WHAT RUMOURS?

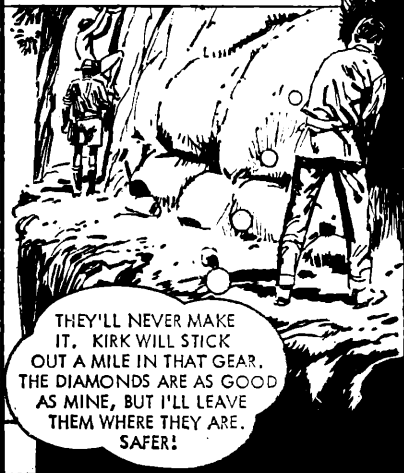
POLLOCK EXPLAINED THAT THE AMERICANS HAD RECENTLY LANDED ON GUADALCANAL IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS, FIVE HUNDRED MILES TO THE EAST, TO ESTABLISH AN AIRFIELD.

THE JAPS WON'T ADVANCE ANY FURTHER WITH THE YANKS ON THEIR FLANK. THERE'S A RUMOUR THAT CRACK TROOPS ARE BEING SENT TO GUADALCANAL. WE WANT TO KNOW DEFINITELY IF THIS IS HAPPENING. IF YOU COULD FIND OUT FOR SURE...

I'LL DO IT IF YOU DO ONE THING FOR ME. I'M GOING TO BURY THESE DIAMONDS AT THE BACK OF THE CAVE. NOTE THE SPOT — JUST IN CASE I DON'T COME BACK!

THINGS WERE TURNING OUT BETTER THAN POLLOCK HAD EVEN IMAGINED.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, IN THE DAWN LIGHT, MIKE AND CHADA SET OFF.



THEY'LL NEVER MAKE IT. KIRK WILL STICK OUT A MILE IN THAT GEAR. THE DIAMONDS ARE AS GOOD AS MINE, BUT I'LL LEAVE THEM WHERE THEY ARE. SAFER!

THEY CUT INLAND TO AVOID JAP COAST PATROLS, BUT HAD NOT GONE MANY MILES WHEN THEY HEARD MACHINE-GUN FIRE.



SOMEONE'S IN TROUBLE! COME ON!

SOON THEY HEARD JUBILANT JAP SHOUTS, AND WERE NOT SURPRISED WHEN THEY DISCOVERED THAT AN AUSTRALIAN PATROL FROM PORT MORESBY HAD BEEN AMBUSHED. THE SURVIVORS WERE PINNED DOWN IN SOME BAMBOOS.



BANZAI!  
KILL THE WHITE  
DOGS!

BUT THEN, SILENTLY, THE WHIP-LASH CURLED ABOUT THE JAP'S NECK AND JERKED HIM BACKWARDS.



TWO SWIFT BLOWS SETTLED THE GUN TEAM.



THE WARNING CRY FROM ONE OF THE STRICKEN MEN CAUSED THE OTHER JAPS TO TURN TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING. MIKE LET THEM HAVE A LONG BURST.



JOLLY  
GOOD WORK,  
YES?

AS THE LAST OF THE JAPS FLED INTO THE JUNGLE, SIX THANKFUL SOLDIERS EMERGED FROM THE BAMBOOS AND RAN TOWARDS THEIR RESCUERS. TO HIS ASTONISHMENT MIKE HEARD HIS NAME SHOUTED.



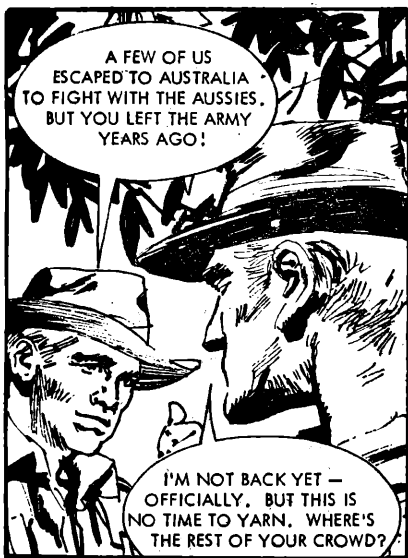
MIKE KIRK —  
SERGEANT KIRK!



AND WHEN THE SOLDIERS GOT CLOSER, IT WAS MIKE WHO FOUND HIMSELF SHOUTING WITH GLEE.



THE TWO MEN HAD BEEN MEMBERS OF MIKE'S COMPANY IN SINGAPORE IN 1938.



THE SIX SOLDIERS LOOKED BLANK.

WE WERE SWEEPING THROUGH THE JUNGLE TOWARDS BUNA. BUT NOW WE'VE LOST BOTH OUR CORPORAL AND OUR SERGEANT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'LL DO. WE'D BETTER PICK A LEADER AND HEAD FOR MORESBY.


WHAT'S WRONG WITH SERGEANT KIRK? HE'S THE BEST N.C.O. I HAVE EVER SERVED UNDER.

IF I TAKE OVER AS YOUR SERGEANT, YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE ORDERS FROM ME, AND WE SHAN'T BE GOING BACK TO PORT MORESBY YET!

LEADING THEM TO A HILL FROM WHICH THEY COULD SEE BUNA, MIKE EXPLAINED.


WE WERE HEADED FOR BUNA TO FIND OUT IF THE JAPS ARE SHIPPING TROOPS TO GUADALCANAL. IF YOU COME, THAT'S WHERE WE'LL GO. OTHERWISE YOU GO BACK TO MORESBY ALONE.

AGREEMENT WAS SOON REACHED. THEY ALL ACCEPTED MIKE AS THEIR LEADER. IT WAS A COMPACT, WELL ARMED GROUP THAT MARCHED TOWARDS BUNA THROUGH THE LONG, HOT DAY. AS THEY TRAVELLED THROUGH THE JUNGLE MIKE TOLD THEM OF HIS ADVENTURE AS A PRISONER.



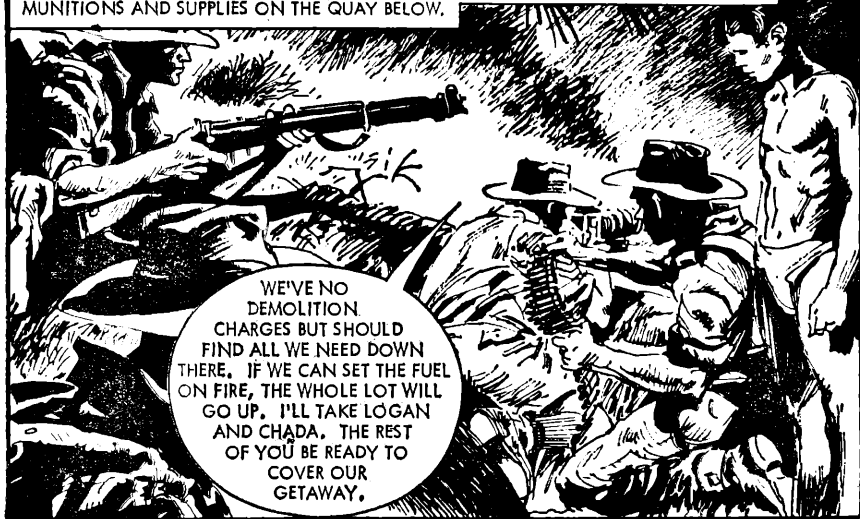
...WHEN THE EARTHQUAKE HIT THE VILLAGE, I WAS SHAVING WITH AN OLD-FASHIONED OPEN RAZOR AND I DARN NEARLY CUT MY THROAT!

BY SUNSET THEY REACHED THEIR DESTINATION, A POINT OVERLOOKING THE PORT. WHILST THE OTHERS THREW THEMSELVES DOWN, EXHAUSTED, MIKE USED THE FIELD-GLASSES PROVIDED BY POLLOCK.

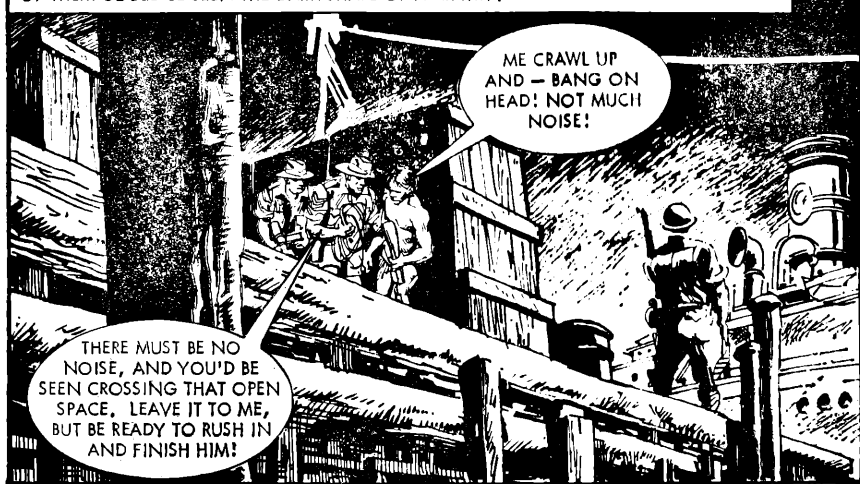


TRANSPORTS! DESTROYERS! MASSES OF STORES AND AMMO ON THE QUAY, HUNDREDS OF JAPS WAITING TO BE EMBARKED! I'LL HAV' TO GET A CLOSER VIEW. IF THIS LITTLE LOT GETS TO GUADAL-CANAL, THE YANKS ARE FINISHED.

BY NIGHTFALL MIKE HAD MADE A DARING DECISION. HE WOULD TRY TO DESTROY THE MUNITIONS AND SUPPLIES ON THE QUAY BELOW.



SILENTLY THE TRIO DESCENDED TO THE EDGE OF THE HARBOUR AREA. SUDDENLY CHADA GRIPPED THE SERGEANT'S ARM. THE JAPS HAD NOT LEFT THE DUMP UNGUARDED. AHEAD OF THEM COULD BE SEEN THE DARK SHAPE OF A SENTRY.



THE SENTRY WAS VERY MUCH ON THE ALERT BUT HE NEVER SAW THE LASH WHICH LEAPT OUT OF THE DARKNESS LIKE A STRIKING SNAKE TO ENCIRCLE HIS NECK SO TIGHTLY HE COULD ONLY GASP.



AS MIKE JERKED THE JAP BACK, CHADA FINISHED HIM WITHOUT A SOUND.



AS THEY CROPT ON, SEEKING PETROL OR SOMETHING EQUALLY INFLAMMABLE, MIKE COULD HEAR MARCHING FEET. TROOPS WERE BEING EMBARKED UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS.



HERE WERE HUNDREDS OF DRUMS OF AIRCRAFT FUEL. BUT HOW TO OPEN ONE WITHOUT MAKING A NOISE?



A GROUP OF MEN WERE APPROACHING, HARSH JAP VOICES MINGLED WITH THE SOUND OF BLOWS AND THE GRUNTS OF THOSE WHO RECEIVED THEM.





BUT THAT WAS JUST WHAT WAS INTENDED. THE FIRST TWO NATIVES, PUSHING THE HEAVY DRUMS, STAGGERED INTO THE OPENING BUT PULLED UP WITH A GRUNT WHEN THEY SAW THE INTRUDERS. FROM OUTSIDE CAME A BELLOW FROM THE JAP IN CHARGE.



IF THE ALARM HAD BEEN RAISED THEN, MIKE AND HIS COMPANIONS WOULD HAVE HAD NO CHANCE. IT WAS CHADA WHO SAVED THE SITUATION BY MAKING APPEALING GESTURES WITH HIS HANDS AND WHISPERING IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE.



WHATEVER CHADA SAID, IT WORKED LIKE MAGIC. THE LEADING PAIR GRUNTED SOMETHING TO THEIR COMPANIONS, MOVED FORWARD AND PUT DOWN THEIR LOAD IN FRONT OF THE CROUCHING THREE. THE OTHERS FOLLOWED THEIR EXAMPLE AND IN A FEW MOMENTS THE TRIO WERE HIDDEN BY A WALL OF PETROL DRUMS.



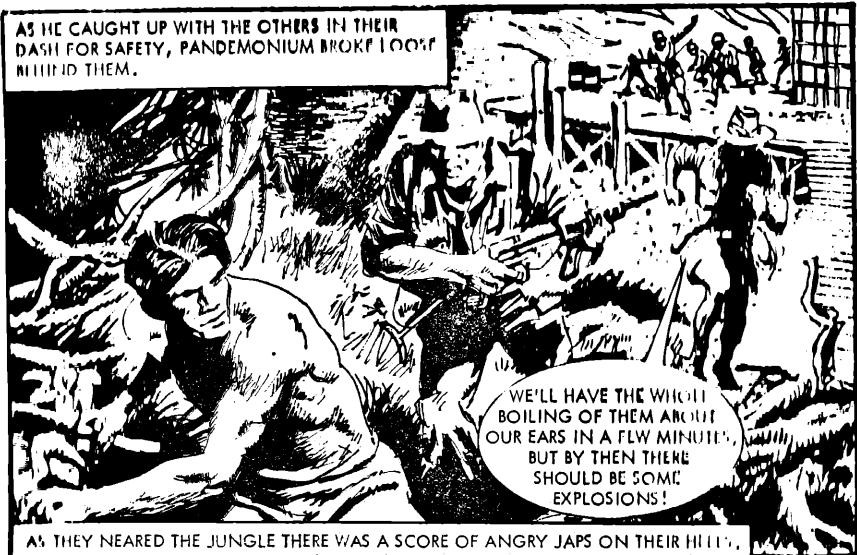
AFTER THEIR NARROW ESCAPE IT WAS DESPERATION WHICH GAVE THEM THE STRENGTH TO OPEN ONE OF THE DRUMS.



FIVE MINUTES LATER, MIKE SENT THE OTHERS BACK WHILE HE IGNITED THE PETROL.



AS HE CAUGHT UP WITH THE OTHERS IN THEIR DASH FOR SAFETY, PANDEMONIUM BROKE LOOSE WITHIN THEM.



WE'LL HAVE THE WHOLE BOILING OF THEM ABOUT OUR EARS IN A FLW MINUTE, BUT BY THEN THERE SHOULD BE SOME EXPLOSIONS!

AS THEY NEARED THE JUNGLE THERE WAS A SCORE OF ANGRY JAPS ON THEIR HILL, SOMEWHERE UP THERE AWAITED THE OTHERS WITH THE CAPTURED MACHINE-GUN,



DOWN, LOGAN! LET 'EM HAVE IT, LADS!

JIM CLEMENT HAD BEEN WAITING FOR THAT. THE CHARGING, ONCOMING JAPS RAN STRAIGHT INTO A STREAM OF LEADEN DEATH.



ALL THE JAPS WERE DEAD OR DYING WHEN THE SABOTEURS ROSE AND SCRAMBLED TO JOIN THEIR COMRADES.



BUT AS CLEMENT SPOKE A GIANTIC EXPLOSION ROCKED THE GROUND, FIRE HAD REACHED THE HIGH-EXPLOSIVES.



THAT WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING. AS THEY WATCHED, THE FIRST EXPLOSION STARTED OFF A CHAIN REACTION OF SMALLER EXPLOSIONS ALL ALONG THE QUAY. THE ENTIRE HARBOR SEEMED TO BE ON FIRE.



ANY PURSUING JAPS WERE NOW RUSHING ABOUT IN TERROR BELOW AS PANICKED OFFICERS SHOUTED ORDERS AND COUNTER-ORDERS.

IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE THE DAZED CHADA COULD BE PERSUADED TO TAKE THE LEAD.



DAWN WAS BREAKING WHEN POLLOCK, DOZING IN THE CAVE, HEARD THE OPENING BARS OF "WALTZING MATILDA".



IT WAS A SHOCK TO POLLOCK TO DISCOVER THAT CHADA WAS NOT ALONE, AND AN EVEN GREATER SHOCK TO HEAR MIKE'S VOICE.



THE COASTWATCHER NEARLY DROPPED THE GUN IN HIS SURPRISE. IT WAS LIKE HEARING A VOICE FROM THE DEAD, FOR HE HAD BEEN SURE THAT MIKE WOULD NEVER GET BACK ALIVE. HE HAD ALREADY PLANNED HOW HE WOULD SPEND THE MONEY FROM THE DIAMONDS.



GOOD TO SEE YOU!  
I'VE GOT A FEW FRIENDS  
WITH ME, AND WE BRING GOOD  
NEWS.....BUT YOU LOOK  
AS THOUGH YOU'VE SEEN  
A GHOST! ANYTHING  
WRONG?

NO! IT'S JUST  
THAT FOR A MOMENT  
I THOUGHT YOU  
WERE JAPS.

EXPLANATIONS WERE SOON MADE, AND THE NEWS TOLD. POLLOCK TRIED TO LOOK PLEASED, BUT HIS THOUGHTS WERE UGLY. THIS MEANT ALTERING HIS PLANS. MIKE KIRK WAS NO LONGER ALONE, BUT IN COMMAND OF SIX RESOLUTE MEN.



RADIO MORESBY THAT  
THE JAPS ARE SHIPPING A CRACK  
DIVISION TO GUADALCANAL. BUT  
IF IT GETS THERE IT WILL HAVE  
NO SUPPLIES. WE LEFT  
THE WHOLE HARBOUR BLAZING.

GREAT  
NEWS - GREAT!

ALTHOUGH HE SEEMED PLEASED AT MIKE'S EXPLOIT, POLLOCK WAS THINKING ONLY OF ONE THING.



YOUR FRIENDS SEEM A RIGHT GOOD BUNCH, BUT DON'T MENTION-YOUR DIAMONDS. GREED DOES FUNNY THINGS.

OK, ACTUALLY, I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT THE DIAMONDS.

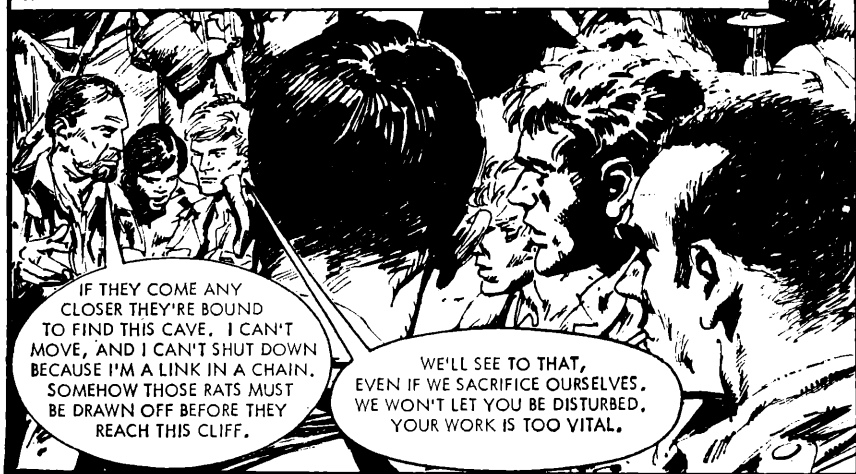
AT THAT MOMENT THERE CAME THE WHISTLED SIGNAL FROM ABOVE. IT WAS ANOTHER OF POLLOCK'S SCOUTS.



WHAT'S HE SO EXCITED ABOUT?

YOU'VE REALLY STIRRED UP THE JAPS! HUNDREDS OF TROOPS ARE COMBING THE AREA, SOME IN A VILLAGE TWO MILES FROM HERE.

POLLOCK KNEW THAT IF THEY LAY LOW UNTIL THE EXCITEMENT WAS OVER, THERE WAS LITTLE CHANCE THAT THEY WOULD BE DISCOVERED, BUT HE PRETENDED OTHERWISE. THIS WAS ANOTHER CHANCE TO GET RID OF MIKE.

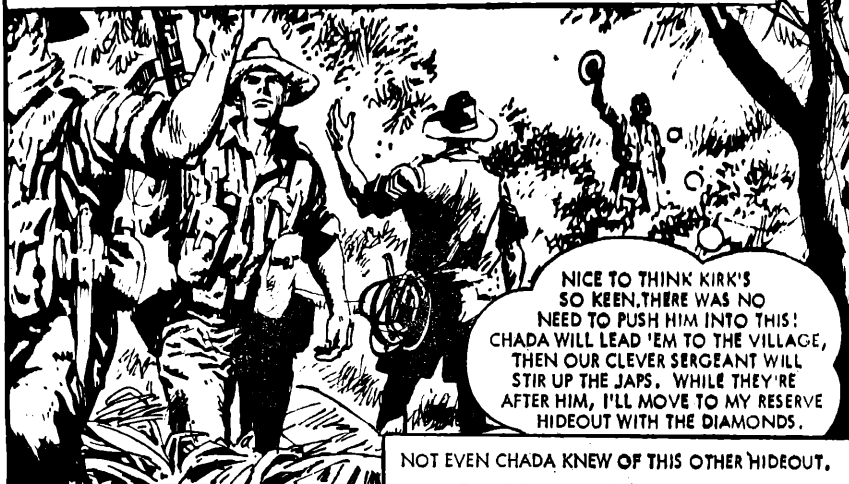


IF THEY COME ANY CLOSER THEY'RE BOUND TO FIND THIS CAVE. I CAN'T MOVE, AND I CAN'T SHUT DOWN BECAUSE I'M A LINK IN A CHAIN. SOMEHOW THOSE RATS MUST BE DRAWN OFF BEFORE THEY REACH THIS CLIFF.

WE'LL SEE TO THAT, EVEN IF WE SACRIFICE OURSELVES. WE WON'T LET YOU BE DISTURBED, YOUR WORK IS TOO VITAL.



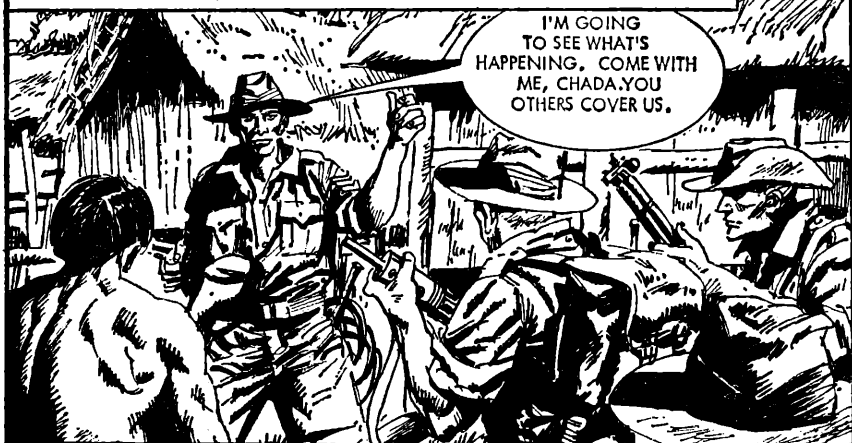
LATE THAT AFTERNOON BLACKIE POLLOCK WATCHED THE LAST OF MIKE'S PARTY MOVE OFF TOWARDS THE NATIVE VILLAGE.



MIKE HAD INSPIRED THE OTHERS WITH SOME OF HIS ENTHUSIASM, AS THEY NEARED THE NATIVE VILLAGE, THEY PREPARED FOR ACTION.



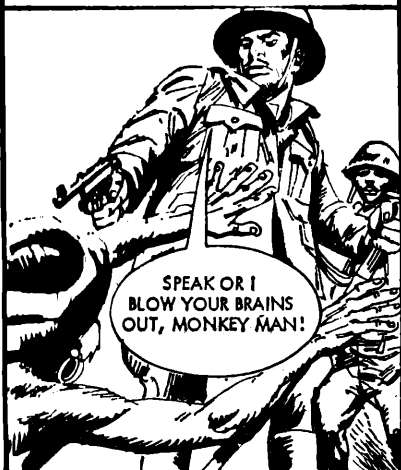
WHEN THEY REACHED THE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE, THEY REALISED THAT SOMETHING UNUSUAL WAS HAPPENING. THERE WAS NOT A VILLAGER IN SIGHT BUT LOUD SCREAMS RENT THE AIR.



FROM THE HUT ROOF MIKE COULD SEE THE NATIVES HAD ALL BEEN HERDED INTO THE SQUARE BY THE JAPS.



COLONEL ICHIKI WAS OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT MIKE FROM THE TERRIFIED VILLAGERS.



MOTIONING CHADA TO STAY, MIKE LEAPT OVER THE HUT ROOFS TOWARDS THE SQUARE.



SCORNING HIS OWN PERIL, MIKE KNEW HE MUST SAVE THE STEADFAST NATIVE AND DRAW OFF THE JAPS. ALL EYES WERE ON THE COLONEL AND HIS VICTIM. NONE SAW THE AVENGER WITH THE WHIP.



IT WAS DONE SO QUICKLY THAT FOR A MOMENT NOBODY KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED. AS THE REVOLVER DROPPED TO THE GROUND AND MIKE DREW BACK THE WHIP, THE COLONEL SWUNG ABOUT — IN TIME TO GET A SECOND LASH ACROSS THE EYES, TEMPORARILY BLINDING HIM.



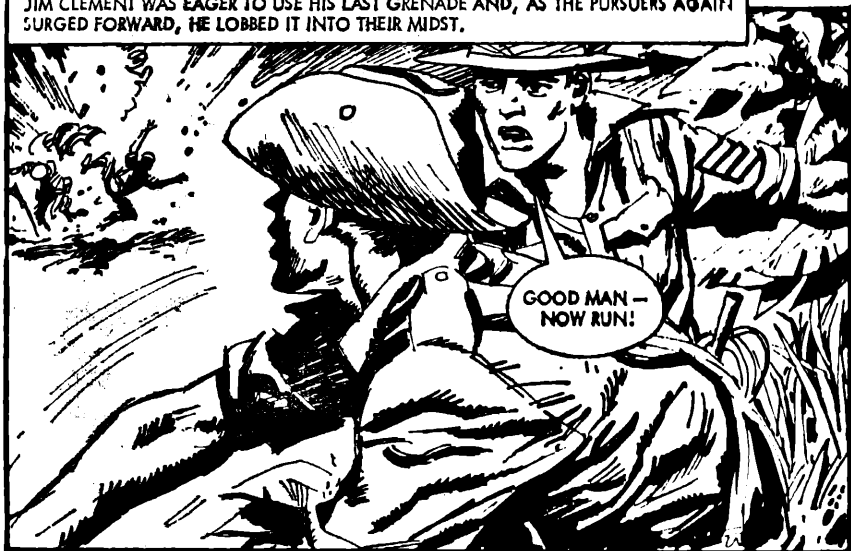
THEN THE JAPS GOT OVER THEIR SURPRISE AND SURGED FORWARD WITH A GREAT HOWL OF RAGE.



AS JAPS REACHED THE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE, THEY WERE MET BY HEAVY FIRE FROM MIKE'S COMPANIONS.



JIM CLEMENT WAS EAGER TO USE HIS LAST GRENADE AND, AS THE PURSUERS AGAIN SURGED FORWARD, HE LOBBED IT INTO THEIR MIDST.



UNDER COVER OF THE CONFUSION THEY GAINED THE JUNGLE AND HEADED WESTWARDS, AWAY FROM THE COAST AND FOLLOCK'S CAVE.

OH, BOY, ARE  
THEY MAD! LISTEN  
TO 'EM!

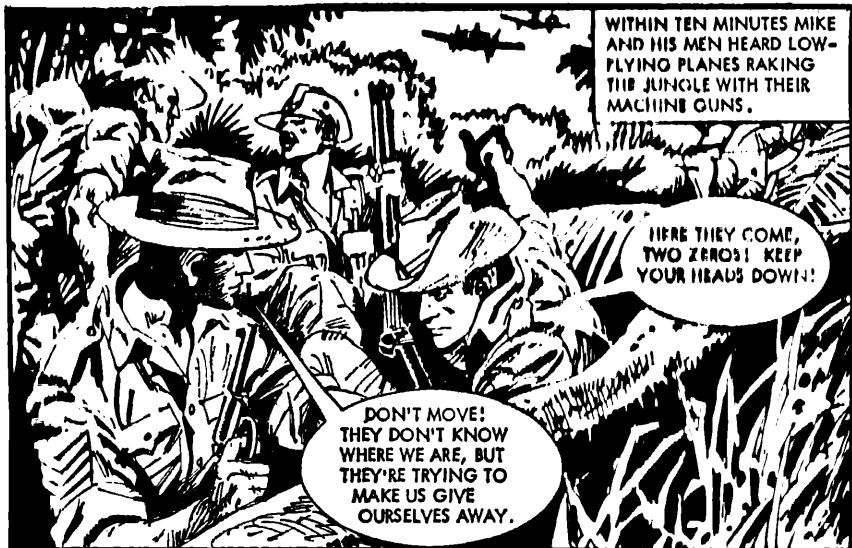
SAVE YOUR BREATH.  
THE COLONEL DIDN'T  
LOOK THE SORT TO GIVE  
UP EASILY.

COLONEL ICHIKI HAD BEEN SHAMED BEFORE  
HIS MEN. HE WOULD NOT REST UNTIL HE  
WAS AVENGED.

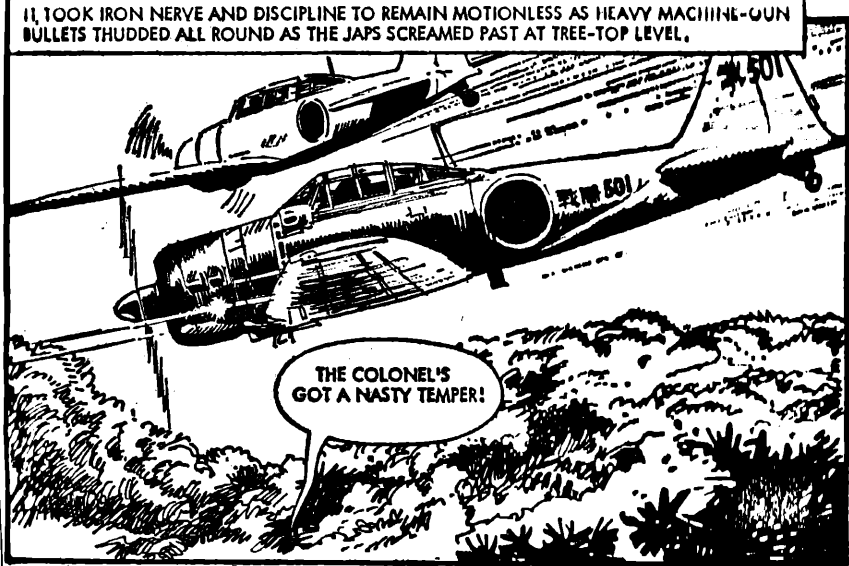
RADIO THE AIR-  
FIELD TO SEND PLANES  
TO OUR ASSISTANCE. THOSE  
DEVILS MUST NOT  
GET AWAY!

NEITHER DID THE COLONEL FORGET OTHER  
POSSIBILITIES —

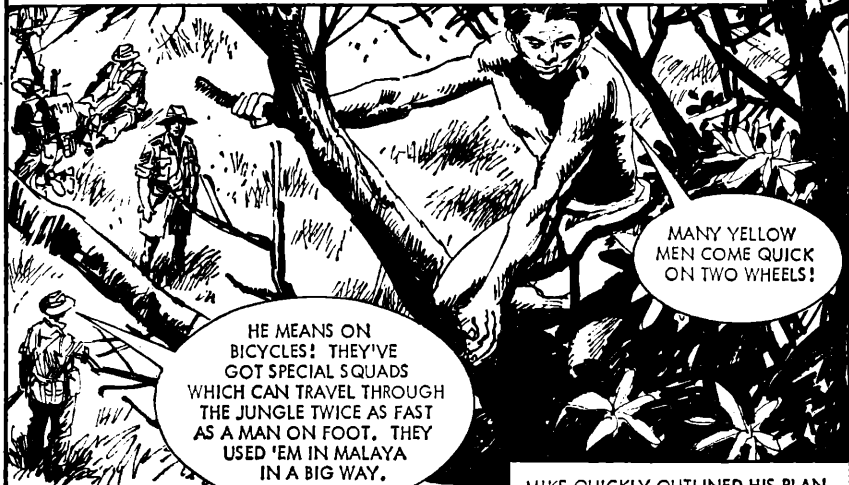
LIEUTENANT OBICHU,  
SEARCH ALONG THE COAST  
AND CLIFFS. THOSE FIENDS MAY  
DOUBLE BACK. LEAVE NO  
ESCAPE OPEN FOR THEM!



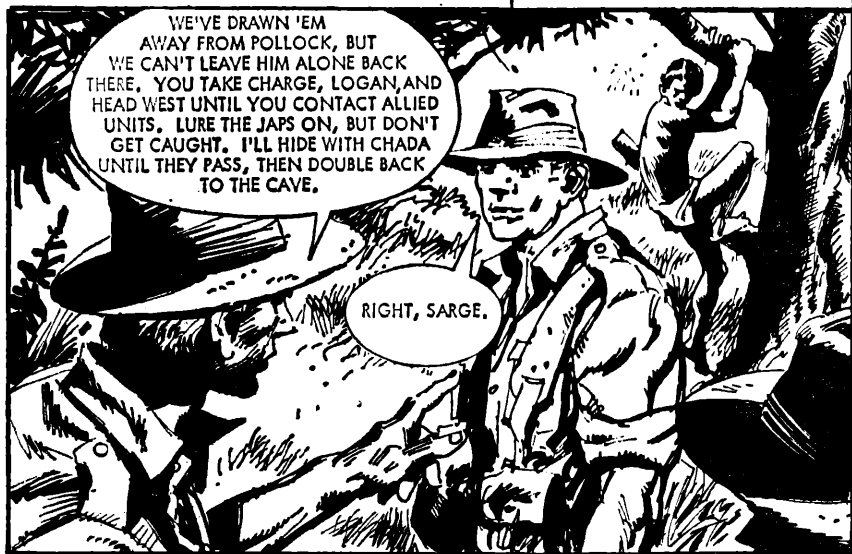
IT TOOK IRON NERVE AND DISCIPLINE TO REMAIN MOTIONLESS AS HEAVY MACHINE-GUN BULLETS THUDDING ALL ROUND AS THE JAPS SCREAMED PAST AT TREE-TOP LEVEL.



WHEN THE PLANES HAD PASSED, CHADA CLIMBED A TALL TREE TO LOOK BACK THE WAY THEY HAD COME. HE WAS SOON SHOUTING DOWN A WARNING.



MIKE QUICKLY OUTLINED HIS PLAN.





MEANTIME FROM THE TOP OF THE CLIFF, BLACKIE POLLOCK WATCHED THE JAP PURSUIT.



POLLOCK WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO PLEASED IF HE HAD KNOWN THAT LIEUTENANT OBICHU, WHO WAS SEARCHING THE CLIFFS, HAD SEEN A FLASH OF SUNLIGHT ON HIS BINOCULARS.



THE COASTWATCHER HAD NO IDEA THAT HE HAD BEEN SEEN OR THAT HIS EVERY MOVE WAS WATCHED AS HE PREPARED TO MOVE TO HIS RESERVE HIDEOUT.



HE HAD BARELY KNELT DOWN AT THE SPOT WHEN SOMETHING BLOCKED THE LIGHT FROM THE ENTRANCE. HE TURNED — TOO LATE.



THERE WAS NO TIME TO REACH FOR A WEAPON. A SECOND LATER THE GIANT AUSSIE WAS FIGHTING DESPERATELY AGAINST LONG ODDS.



TWO OF THE JAPS WERE OUT OF ACTION AND POLLOCK HAD TAKEN SEVERAL HEFTY BLOWS BEFORE HE WAS FINALLY MASTERED AND HIS ARMS TIED BEHIND HIS BACK.



SOMEHOW GETTING POLLOCK TO THE CLIFF TOP, OBICHU ORGANISED HIS PATROL FOR THEIR TRIUMPHANT RETURN.



SEVERAL MILES TO THE WEST, MIKE AND CHADA WATCHED THE JAP CYCLE TROOPS SKILFULLY NEGOTIATING THE NARROW TRAIL BENEATH THE TREES.

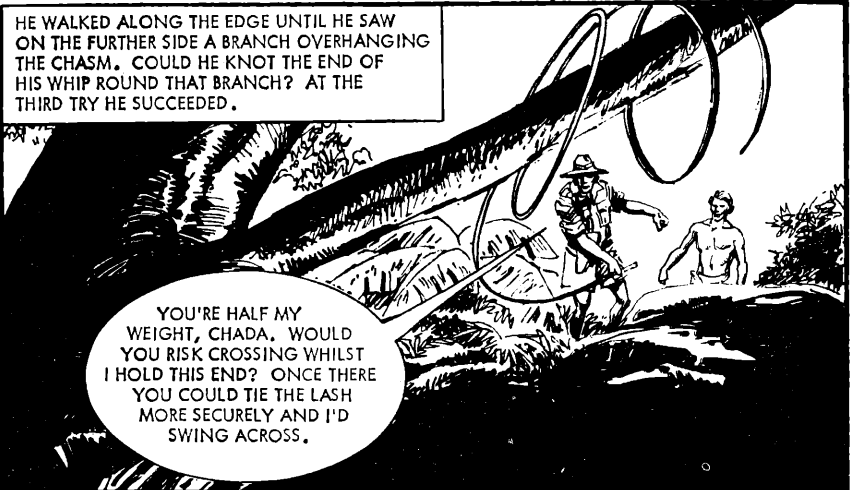


WHEN THEY BELIEVED THE LAST OF THE JAPS HAD PASSED, MIKE AND CHADA HEADED FOR THE COAST. BEFORE LONG THEY HEARD JAPS BEATING THROUGH THE JUNGLE TOWARDS THEM.





HE WALKED ALONG THE EDGE UNTIL HE SAW ON THE FURTHER SIDE A BRANCH OVERHANGING THE CHASM. COULD HE KNOT THE END OF HIS WHIP ROUND THAT BRANCH? AT THE THIRD TRY HE SUCCEEDED.



YOU'RE HALF MY WEIGHT, CHADA. WOULD YOU RISK CROSSING WHILST I HOLD THIS END? ONCE THERE YOU COULD TIE THE LASH MORE SECURELY AND I'D SWING ACROSS.

IT WAS A LOT TO ASK, BUT CHADA, ALTHOUGH TERRIFIED, DID NOT HESITATE. HE DID NOT EVEN CONSIDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE END OF THE LASH CAME LOOSE WHEN HE WAS PART WAY ACROSS.



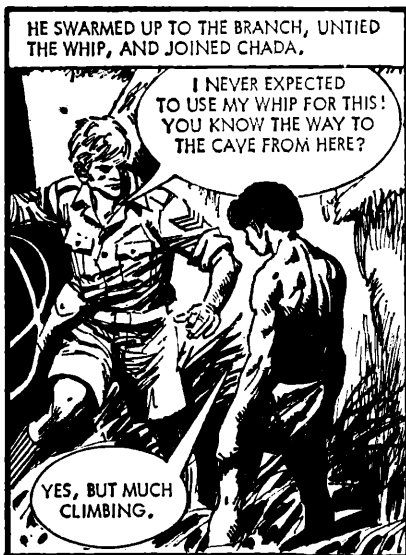
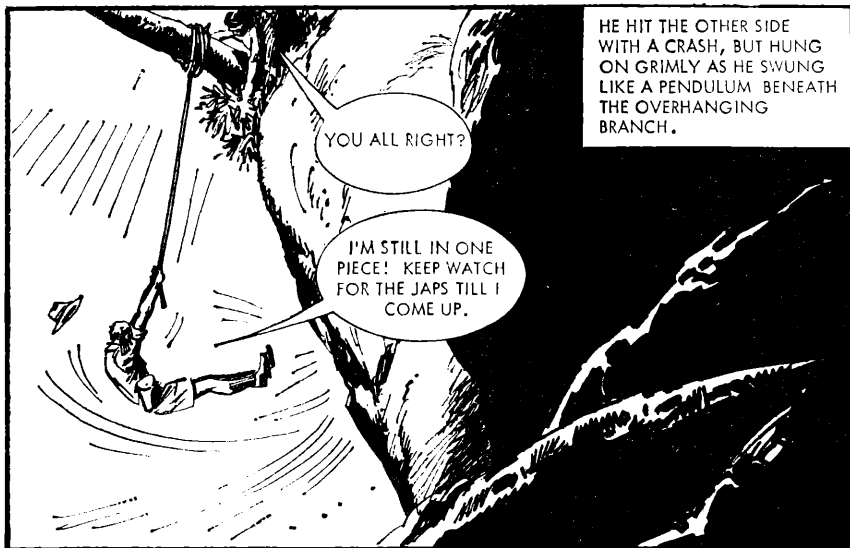
IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO THAT KID I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF!

THE LASH DID NOT SLIP. CHADA REACHED THE TREE AND MADE SURE THE THONG WAS FIRMLY TIED.



MIKE COULD ONLY CROSS BY LETTING HIMSELF SWING DOWN INTO THE RAVINE. HE TWISTED THE SLACK OF THE WHIP AROUND HIS WRISTS, THEN WENT OVER THE EDGE, FEET BRACED TO TAKE THE SHOCK WHEN HE HIT THE OTHER SIDE.







NO CHALLENGE CAME FROM THE CAVE, AND MIKE'S SHOUT BROUGHT NO RESPONSE. SOON THEY KNEW THE REASON.

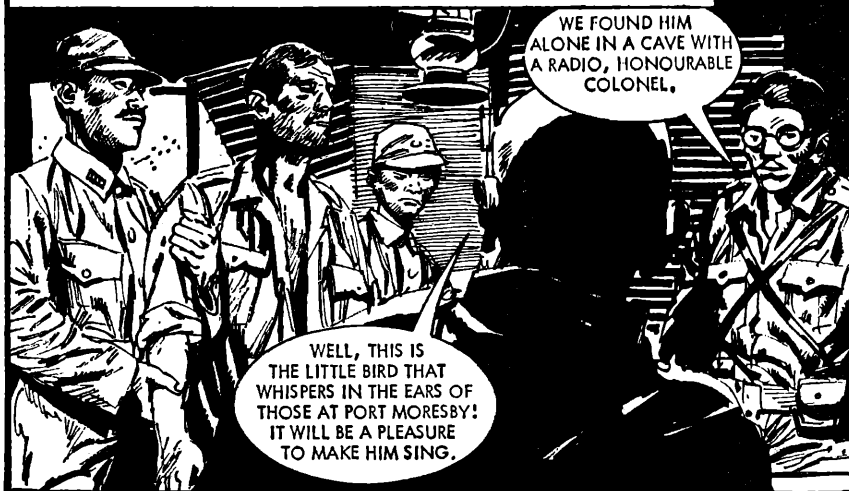


MIKE HURRIEDLY WENT OVER ALL POLLOCK HAD TOLD HIM OF THE COASTWATCHING SYSTEM.



WHEN CHADA HAD SLIPPED AWAY MIKE, STARVING, ALMOST OUT ON HIS FEET, ATE WHAT FOOD THE JAPS HAD OVERLOOKED THEN FELL SOUND ASLEEP. HE NEEDED NEW STRENGTH TO SEARCH FOR POLLOCK.

BUT JUST BEFORE THIS POLLOCK'S CAPTORS HAD GOT HIM TO COLONEL ICHIKI'S HEADQUARTERS IN THE VILLAGE. HE HAD RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS,



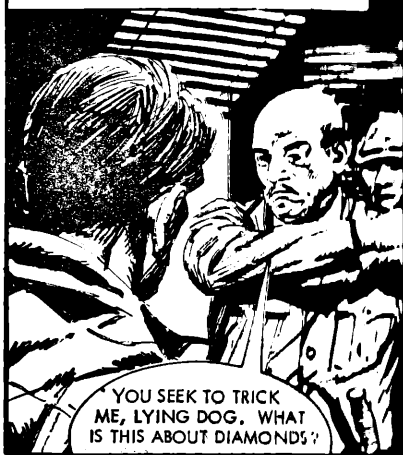
BLACKIE POLLOCK KNEW WHAT WAS IN STORE FOR HIM. HE HAD HEARD MANY ACCOUNTS OF THE HORRORS INFLICTED ON PRISONERS BY THE JAPANESE, AND HE WAS A SPECIAL PRIZE.



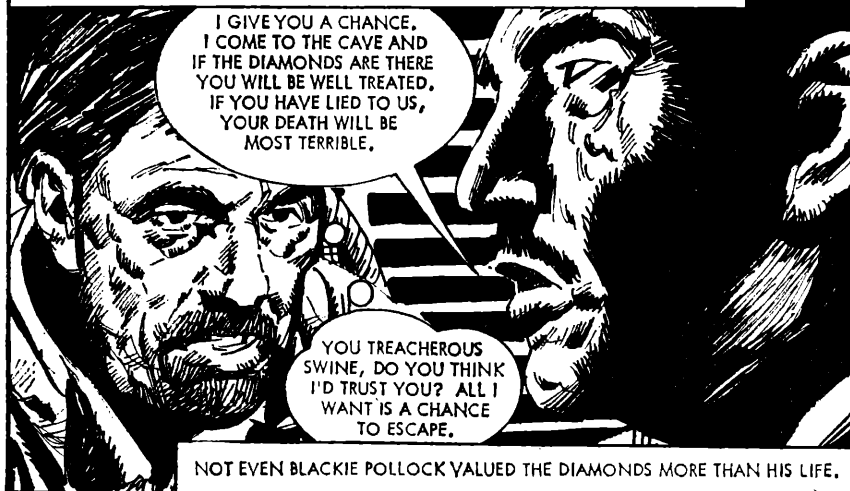
THE BURLY AUSSIE LONGED TO DRIVE HIS FIST INTO THE JAP'S FACE BUT HE REALISED HE MUST PLAY FOR TIME TO ESCAPE.



ICHIKI WAS THE ONLY ONE THERE WHO UNDERSTOOD ENGLISH. POLLOCK WAS PROBABLY BLUFFING, BUT HE MIGHT JUST BE TELLING THE TRUTH.



POLLOCK EXPLAINED. ICHIKI STILL HESITATED, BUT FINALLY THE TEMPTATION WAS TOO GREAT FOR HIM.



A HOUR LATER POLLOCK WAS LED TOWARDS THE CLIFFS BY ICHIKI AND AN ESCORT. A FULL MOON LIT THE JUNGLE UP BRIGHTLY AS HE STUMBLLED ALONG BETWEEN HIS CAPTORS, STRAINING AT HIS BONDS.



AS THEY NEARED THE CAVE, POLLOCK KNEW THE GAMBLE WAS LOST, PRETENDING TO TRIP, HE FELL HEAVILY TO GAIN MORE TIME.



AT THAT SAME MOMENT MIKE HAD CLIMBED FROM THE LEDGE TO THE TOP OF THE CLIFF. WITH HIM HE HAD BROUGHT THE DIAMONDS. ON HEARING ANGRY VOICES DOWN THE SLOPE, HE TOOK COVER AMONGST THE BUSHES.



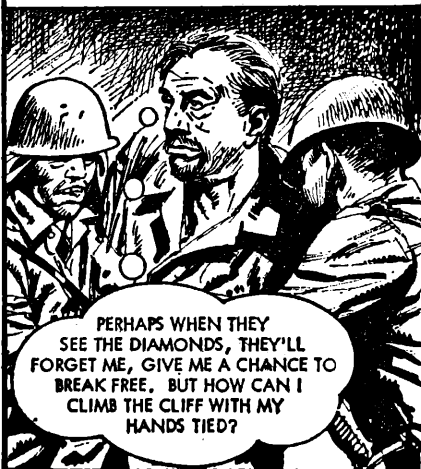
HE WATCHED THE COLONEL AND TWO OF THE OTHERS DROP ONTO THE LEDGE. THEN AS THE HELPLESS COASTWATCHER WAS PUSHED OVER FEET-FIRST, MIKE HEARD THE JAP OFFICER SNARL IN ENGLISH.



SHOCKED BY WHAT HE HAD HEARD, MIKE CRAWLED FORWARD AND PEERED OVER. TWO OF THE JAPS HELD POLLOCK OUTSIDE THE CAVE ENTRANCE BUT COLONEL ICHIKI AND THE OTHER TWO WERE INSIDE.



POLLOCK WOULD HAVE GLADLY EXCHANGED THE DIAMONDS FOR HIS LIFE, BUT HE KNEW THAT EVEN THAT BARGAIN WAS DENIED HIM.



PERHAPS WHEN THEY SEE THE DIAMONDS, THEY'LL FORGET ME, GIVE ME A CHANCE TO BREAK FREE, BUT HOW CAN I CLIMB THE CLIFF WITH MY HANDS TIED?

MIKE COULD ONLY WAIT FOR ICHIKI'S ANGRY ROAR IN DISMAY. HE KNEW THE DIAMONDS THEY SOUGHT WERE IN HIS POCKET.



LYING DOG! THERE IS NOTHING HERE! YOU HAVE POOLED US!

IT SEEMED TO MIKE THAT THE COLONEL'S SHOUT STARTLED THE JAPS INTO SLACKENING THEIR GRIP ON THE PRISONER. REALISING THIS, POLLOCK TORE FREE AND STRUGGLED BACKWARDS — FORGETTING THE NARROWNESS OF THE LEDGE.



HE'S OVER!

AAAAAH!

LISTENING TO COLONEL ICHIKI CURSING AND STRIKING HIS MEN FOR THEIR CLUMSINESS, MIKE DETERMINED THAT BLACKIE POLLOCK SHOULD BE AVENGED. HE MOVED BACK TO BE READY FOR THE FIRST JAP CLIMBING BACK ONTO THE CLIFF.



THE SUDDEN LASH MADE THE JAP LET GO HIS HOLD. HE FELL BACK, CARRYING HIS COMPANION BEHIND WITH HIM.





ICHIKI ORDERED ANOTHER MAN UP TO CLEAR THE WAY, BUT HE MET THE SAME FATE.



THE TRAPPED PAIR TRIED VAINLY TO FIND ANOTHER WAY DOWN BEFORE RETREATING INTO THE CAVE. MIKE HAD THEM COINED, BUT HOW LONG DARED HE STAY?




LUCKY LOGAN AND HIS FIVE COMPANIONS HAD ALREADY LINED UP THE AUSTRALIAN COLUMN PROBING THE JUNGLE EAST OF PORT MUMBA. THEY TOLD MAJOR HORTON, WHO WAS IN CHARGE, THAT ABOUT A HUNDRED JAPANESE WERE ON THEIR TRAIL. AN AMBUSH WAS DULY PREPARED.



HORTON HAD PLACED THE REST OF HIS FORCE UNDER COVER ON THE OTHER SIDE, AND THEY NOW POURED A BLISTERING FIRE INTO THE JAPS FROM THE REAR.

WE WILL DIE  
FIGHTING FOR  
THE EMPEROR!  
CHARGE!



HIS CRY RALLIED THE SURVIVORS, AND THEY CHARGED THE WESTERN BANK.

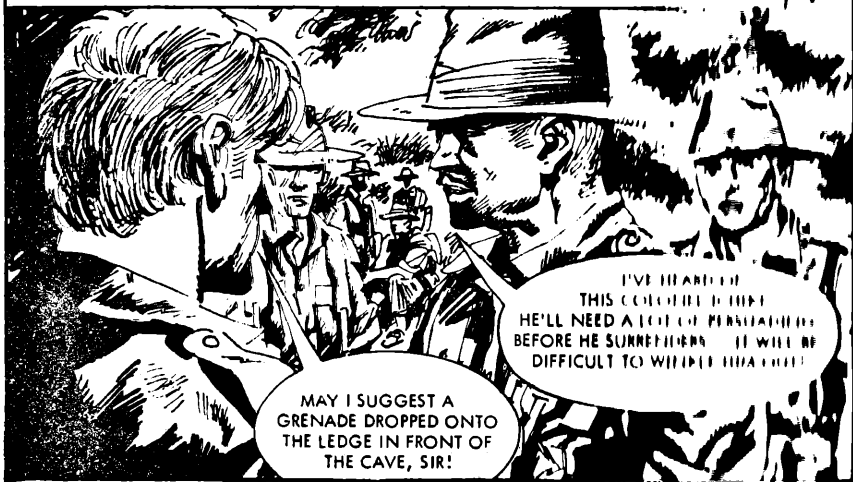
NO FURTHER  
MATE!



LEADERLESS, THE REMAINING JAPS SURRENDERED.



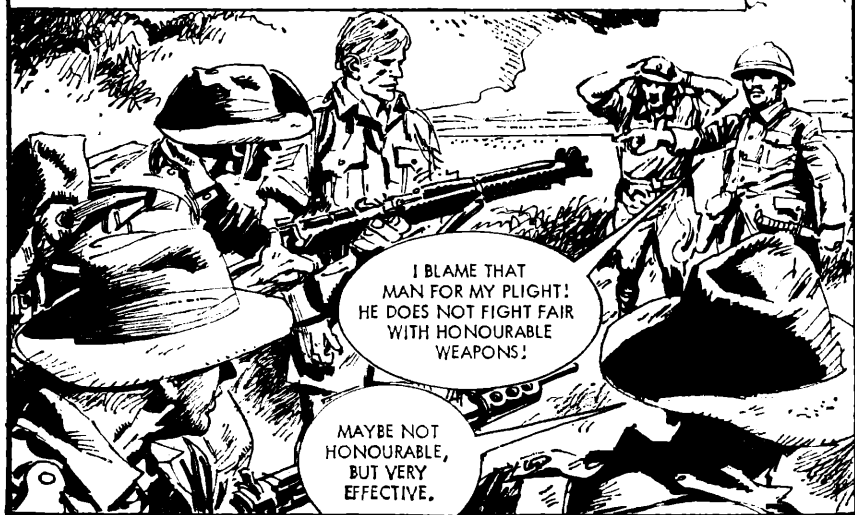
THE AUSSIES PUSHED ON AND IT WAS JUST AFTER DAWN WHEN LUCKY LOCATED THEM ONTO THE CLIFF, TO THE SURPRISE OF MIKE WHO WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE. QUICKLY HE TOLD HORTON WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO POLLOCK, AND OF THE TRAPPED PAIR IN THE CAVE.



THE GRENADE BLEW IN PART OF THE CAVE ENTRANCE, AND AS THE ECHOES OF THE EXPLOSION DIED AWAY, MIKE BELLOWED DOWN THEIR ULTIMATUM.



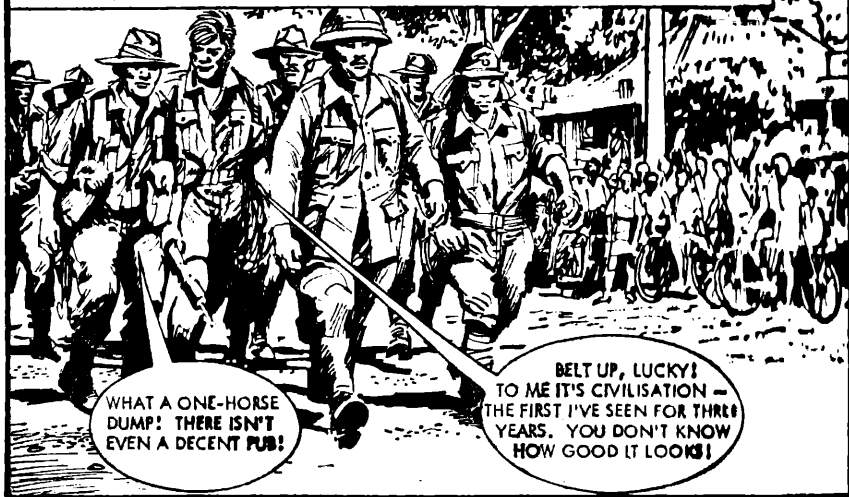
NOT EVEN THE FANATICAL JAP COLONEL FANCIED BEING BURIED ALIVE. HE DULY CAME OUT AND SURRENDERED WITH THE SURVIVING SOLDIER.



THE AUSTRALIANS LAY HIDDEN ALL THAT DAY, THEN STARTED ON THEIR RETURN JOURNEY. ON THEIR WAY THEY SKIRTED BUNA, WHERE SMOKE STILL HUNG OVER THE QUAYS FROM MIKE'S RAID.



IT TOOK THEM TEN DAYS TO REACH THE WEST COAST. ON THEIR WAY THEY OVERTOOK THE PRISONERS CAPTURED AT THE RIVER CROSSING, AND ALL MORESBY TURNED OUT TO WATCH THEM MARCH IN.



MAJOR HORTON'S GLOWING REPORT RESULTED IN MIKE, RESPLENDENT IN A NEW UNIFORM, REPORTING TO H.Q. A FEW DAYS LATER TO MEET AN AUSTRALIAN LIEUTENANT COLONEL.



OUTSIDE HE FOUND HIS OLD COMRADES OF THE ROYAL BORDERERS AWAITING HIM.



AS THEY PASSED DOWN THE MAIN STREET HE SAW A SIGN WHICH CAUSED HIM TO CLAP HIS HAND TO A BULGE IN HIS TUNIC POCKET. HE HAD REMEMBERED THE POUCH OF UNCUT DIAMONDS, AND WHAT HE INTENDED DOING WITH THEM.

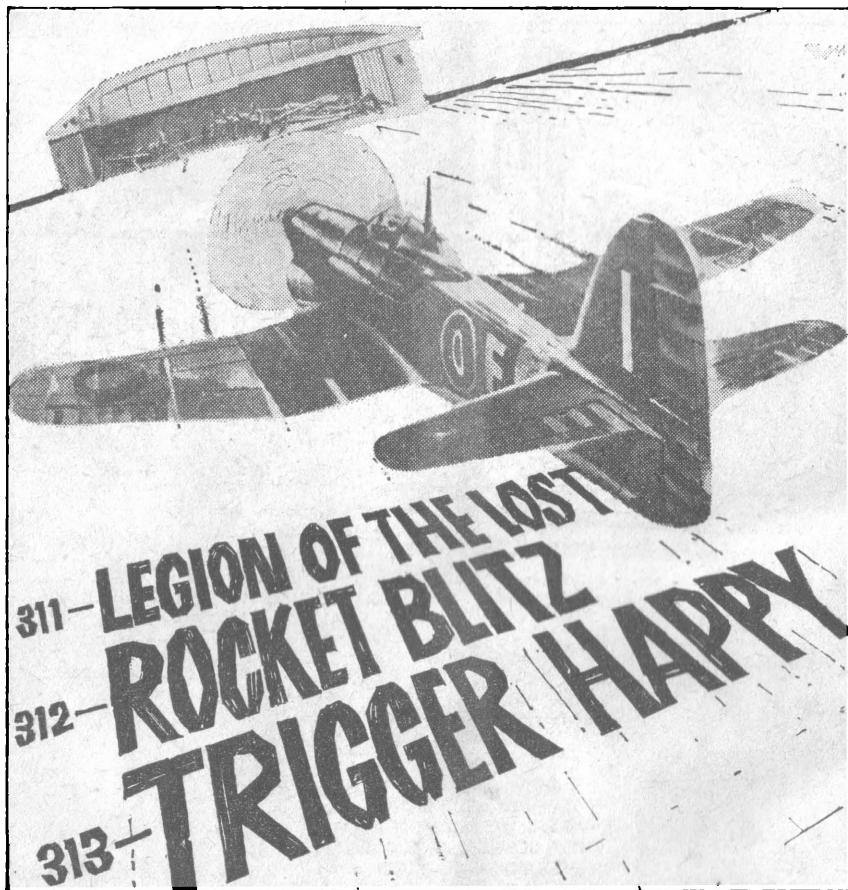


JUST A MINUTE —  
WAIT FOR ME! I WANT  
TO GET SOMETHING OFF MY  
CHEST, SOMETHING THAT I'M  
NOT GOING TO WORRY  
ABOUT UNTIL THE WAR  
IS OVER.

**Commando**  
**THE END**

AND LONG BEFORE THE WAR WAS OVER, MANY A MISERABLE JAP WISHED MIKE HAD STUCK TO DIAMOND PROSPECTING AND LEFT THE FIGHTING TO OTHERS. HIS BRAND OF FIGHTING THEY DIDN'T LIKE ONE LITTLE BIT!

**DON'T MISS THE NEXT THREE**



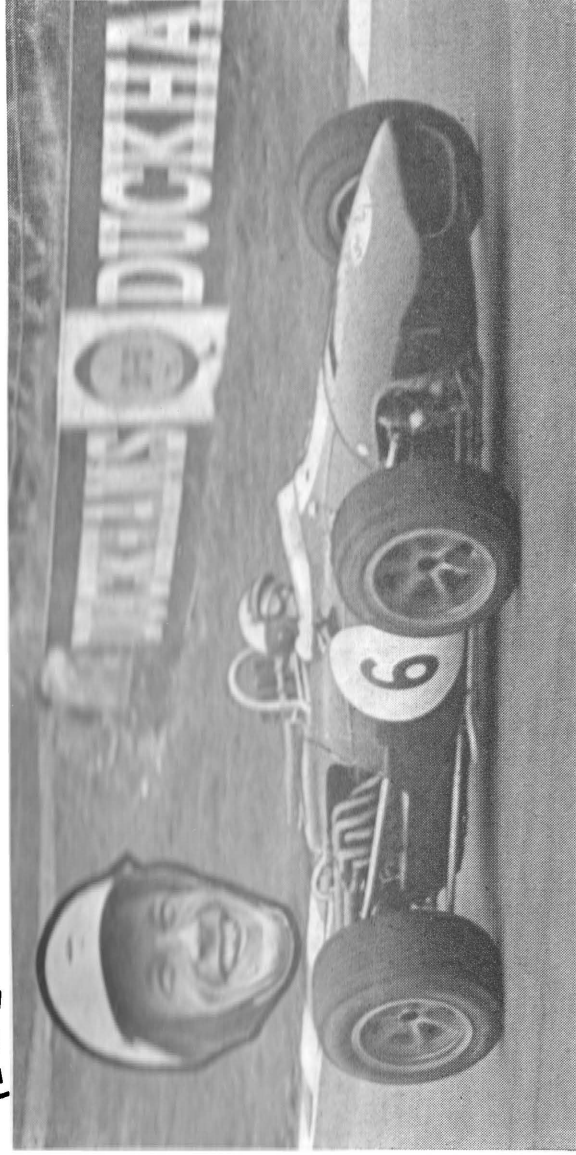
**68 PAGES 1/- EACH ON SALE SOON**

Printed and Published in Great Britain by D. C. THOMSON & Co., Ltd., 186 Fleet St., London, E.C.4.  
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# ACE ON WHEELS



**I**NTRODUCED to motor racing in 1947 by fellow American, Phil Hill, red-haired Ritchie Ginther toured the States, picking up all the experience he could before breaking into international events. He made his first Grand Prix appearance at Monaco in a Ferrari, soon earning top job with the Italian firm as their chief tester.

But Ritchie didn't stay with Ferrari. Improving with

every race, he moved to drive for BRM. Then, on a trial run, the BRM car Ritchie was driving burst into flames, burning him badly.

This kept him out of action for a while, but he battled his way back to the top, tearing round the race circuits in cars like this rocket-fast Eagle-Gurney Weslake.

# FORGOTTEN SERGEANT

**P**ADDING, silent as a beast of prey, out of the New Guinea jungle came Sergeant Mike Kirk, soldier turned diamond prospector. His body was hard and tanned as hickory, his hair bleached white with the sun. Round his waist he wore a leather loin cloth and in his hand he carried a leather stock-whip.

For years he'd lived with savage head hunters, cut off from the world and news of the mighty war now raging. In less than twelve hours he was to find out all about it . . . and he was slap bang in the middle of Jap territory.

